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PRESS RELEASE

U.S., BANGLADESH UNDERTAKE FIRST CARAT NAVAL EXERCISE

CHITTAGONG, SEPTEMBER 18 -- The Bangladesh and U.S. Navies begin eight days of maritime safety and security exercises Sept. 18, during the first-ever Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh 2011.

The event began Sept. 18, at a ceremony at BNS Issa Khan. It marks the first time Bangladesh has participated in the 17 year-old CARAT exercise series, which the U.S. Navy conducts with navies of seven other Southeast Asian nations. CARAT participants now include Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

“The fact that CARAT attracts navies from the region is a particularly important point,” said the U.S. Navy’s Rear Adm. Tom Carney, Commander, Task Force 73 and the executive agent for the exercise. “I look at 2011 as the first of many successful years of engagement between the U.S. and Bangladesh Navies.”

There are four U.S. Navy ships and approximately 500 U.S. personnel participating in the exercise. The ships include the guided missile destroyer USS Kidd (DDG 100); the frigate USS Ford (FFG 54); mine countermeasures ship USS Avenger (MCM 1) and the dive and salvage rescue ship USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50).

CARAT Bangladesh combines training events ashore and at sea, with shore events focused on dive training, riverine warfare, ship boarding training and medical and community service projects. Training events at sea will occur between U.S. and Bangladesh Navy ships, and includes helicopter operations, shipboard communications and maneuvering drills, surface gunnery exercises and tactical freeplay events.

“We’ve got a challenging schedule to complete over the next 8 days, including an aggressive range of at-sea events,” Admiral Carney added. “The friendships, understanding and

trust we develop between the next generation of naval leaders are equally important to what we learn and exercise at sea,” he said.

For more information on the exercise, visit the CARAT Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/Exercise.CARAT>. All material posted on the CARAT Web site is “released” and available for use by all media outlets and other reposting.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)